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Message Text

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17
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 SAB-01 ACDA-05 /088 W
---------- 105987
R 030720Z NOV 75
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6327
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 15769

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, UR, SY, IZ
SUBJECT: PODGORNY RECEIVES SPECIAL IRAQI REPRESENTATIVE

REFS: (A) DAMASCUS 4031 (B) DAMASCUS 4090
(C) DAMASCUS 4200

1. PRAVDA FRONT-PAGES ON OCTOBER 31 RECEPTION BY
PODGORNY OF /"SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE IRAQI
PRESIDENT" T. AZIZ, WHO PRAVDA WRITES, GAVE PODGORNY
Z "PERSONAL MESSAGE" FROM PRESIDENT AL-BAKR TO BREZHNEV.
DISCUSSION DURING THE MEETING, ACCORDING TO PRAVDA,
WAS DEVOTED TO BILATERAL RELATIONS -- OVER WHICH
BOTH SIDES EXPRESSED SATISFACTION -- AND THE MIDDLE
EAST SITUATION. ON THE LATTER ISSUE THE TWO
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REPRESENTATIVES AGREED THAT THE SITUATION IS STILL

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"TENSE AND EXPLOSIVE," AND THAT NORMALIZATION CAN ONLY
BE ACHIEVED BY FULL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL AND BY FULL
SATISFACTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIANS.
BOTH EXPRESSED THE INTENTION OF THEIR GOVERNMENTS TO
CONTINUE "COMPREHENSIVE ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT" TO THE
PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE MOVEMENT, AND ALSO "EMPHASIZED
THE NECESSITY OF CONSOLIDATING THE UNITY OF THE ARAB
COUNTRIES" IN THEIR COMMON CAUSE.

2. COMMENT: REFTELS ALLUDE TO EFFORTS BY SYRIA TO PATCH
UP RELATIONS WITH IRAQ, A GOAL WHICH MOSCOW UNDOUBTEDLY
SUPPORTS IN ITS EFFORTS TO MAGNIFY THE STRENGTH OF THE
NORTHERN TIER OF ARAB STATES AND THEREBY ITS OWN ROLE IN
THE MIDDLE EAST. REF A ALSO SPECULATES THAT ONE OF
ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH ASAD TOOK UP IN HIS RECENT
MOSCOW VISIT WAS THE QUESTION OF SOVIET MEDIATION
BETWEEN THE TWO STATES. REF C REPORTED THAT SOVIETS MAY BE
PROMOTING SYRO-IRAQI ENTENTE, IF THIS IS INDEED THE CASE,
THE PODGORNY-AZIZ MEETING, AS WELL AS THE AL-BAKR LETTER TO
BREZHNEV, MAY BE THE FIRST PUBLIC INDICATION
OF ANOTHER SOVIET EFFORT TO MOVE THE TWO BAATHIST STATES
TOWARD TALKING TERMS.

3. ALSO OF INTEREST, HOWEVER, ARE THE RELATIVELY GLOWING
TERMS IN WHICH THE PRAVDA REPORT DESCRIBES THE STATE
OF BILATERAL RELATIONS, WHICH, FOLLOWING SADAAM
HUSSEIN'S 1974-EARLY-1975 EFFORTS TO REDUCE IRAQI'S
DEPENDENCE ON THE SOVIET UNION AND HIS
SEEMINGLY LESS THAN USCCESSFUL VISIT TO THE
SOVIET UNION THIS SPRING, HAVE NOT BEEN NOTABLY WARM.
PODGORNY'S RECEPTION OF THE RELATIVELY LOW-RANKING AZIZ,
THE PUBLICITY GIVEN TO THE LETTER FROM PRAVDA, AND THE FACT
THAT THE LETTER TO BREZHNEV IS FROM AL-BAKR RATHER THAN
FROM SADDAM HUSSEIN, WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT
THE SOVIET UNION IS THE PARTY PUSHING FOR SOME OUTWARD
SHOW OF AN IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS.
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